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## What is *Convallaria odorata* Mill.?

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In the *Annals of Scottish Nat. Hist.* 226. 1906, I suggested that the plant described by Miller in the *Gardener's Dictionary* Ed. 8, no. 3, 1768, is the *Convallaria Polygonatum* L. Mr. James Britten, however, dogmatically asserted that Miller's specimen representing this species in the National Herbarium at South Kensington is a form of *Polygonatum multiflorum*. As there was doubt about the identity, I unfortunately chose *P. Sigillum* (Lepech.) to represent *Convallaria Polygonatum*, since British botanists have not accepted *Polygonatum Polygonatum*, the more logical combination.

The evidence, however, apart from the herbarium specimen, about the identity, of which more anon, in favor of Miller's plant being *C. Polygonatum* L. is very strong.

Gerarde (*Herball* 758. 1597) first records it as British and he calls it Sweete smelling Salomon's Seale: the *Polygonatum* 1 [*sic*] Clusii. That sort of Salomon's Seale with broad leaves groweth in certaine woods in Yorkshire called Clapdale woods. Johnson (*Gerarde Emac.* 904. 1633) corrects the reference to *Polygonatum* 2 Clusii and replaces the poor figure by an unmistakable plate of *C. Polygonatum* L. Ray (*Syn.* 1690) calls it the 'Sweet Smelling Solomon's Seal' and he does so also in his *Historia* (1: 665. 1688), where he says "flores . . . verum majores et odore (qui in vulgari nullus est)." Linnaeus (*Sp. Pl.* 451. 1762) under *C. Polygonatum* quotes Bauhin (*Pinax* 303) for *Polygonatum latifolium, flore majore odore*. Hudson (*Flora Anglica* 146. 1762) gives the same reference and adds "Sweet Lily-Convally or Solomon's Seal." So that in Britain till the time of Miller the Sweet-Smelling Solomon's Seal was the name given to the plant with larger flowers, and angular stem—the *C. Polygonatum* L. Therefore the presumptive evidence of Miller's *C. odorata* being identical was very strong. His description in the *Dictionary* confirms

this — *C. odorata*, Broad-leaved Solomon's Seal with a larger sweet flower.

Recently I have examined Miller's authentic specimen in the National Herbarium and to my great surprise find that Mr. Britten has made a serious error in naming it *P. multiflorum*. The specimen, which has the angular stems, the large flowers and glabrous filaments, is unmistakably *Convallaria Polygonatum* L., *Polygonatum officinale* All.

To those who follow the Vienna Rules, which claim priority for the earliest specific name except when it involves the duplication of a name, the name I first suggested has priority, *i. e.*, *Polygonatum odoratum* (Miller) Druce.

An attempt has been made to supersede *Polygonatum* Adans. by *Salomonina* Heister ex Fabric. Enum. Pl. Hort. Helmstad., Ed. 2. 38. 1763; indeed this is given in large type in the third Supplement to the Index Kewensis 158, but there is no need for this since *Polygonatum* dates not from Adanson 1763 (Fam. des Plantes) but from Hill 1756 (British Herbal).

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